

P 162226Z DEC 08  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BERN PRIORITY  
INFO MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 131866

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/16/2033  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [MTCRE](#) [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [ETTC](#) [SZ](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: SYRIAN TRADING ENTITY INTERESTED IN PURCHASING  
MACHINE TOOLS FROM SWISS FIRM(S)

Classified By: ISN/MTR DIRECTOR PAM DURHAM FOR REASON 1.4 (D).

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Embassy Bern, please see paragraph 3.

¶2. (S) Background/Objectives: The USG has information indicating that in May and June 2008, the Syrian trading firm Hamza Company expressed interest in purchasing computer numerically controlled (CNC) milling machines from the Swiss firm Maschinenfabrik Liechti and Company AG. Hamza requested price quotations for 5-axis machining centers, and also inquired about the possibility of visiting the firm to discuss a potential purchase. After providing the requested price information to Hamza, a Liechti representative advised Hamza of the need to consult Swiss authorities before scheduling a visit. We are concerned that these machines, which are controlled by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Wassenaar Arrangement, could be destined for an entity involved in Syria's ballistic missile program, and want to share this information with Swiss officials in order to assist in their export-control efforts.

¶3. (S) Action Request: Request Embassy Bern approach appropriate Swiss authorities to deliver talking points/non-paper in paragraph 4 below and report response. Talking points also may be provided as non-paper.

¶4. (S) Begin talking points/non-paper:

(SECRET REL SWITZERLAND)

-- We would like to bring to your attention information that will be of interest in supporting your export control efforts.

-- We have information indicating that in May and June 2008, the Syrian trading firm Hamza Company expressed interest in purchasing computer numerically controlled (CNC) milling machines from the Swiss firm Maschinenfabrik Liechti and Co. AG.

-- Specifically, Hamza requested price quotations for CNC g-mill 550 and Turbomill 1400-xl five-axis machining centers, and also inquired about the possibility of visiting Liechti in order to discuss a potential purchase of these machines.

-- A Liechti representative provided the requested price information to Hamza, but advised that he would have to consult with Swiss authorities about any potential sale to Hamza before scheduling a visit.

-- The g-mill 550 is controlled by both the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Wassenaar Arrangement, and could be used in a missile program to produce parts with complex profiles such as turbopump impellers.

-- The Turbomill 1400-xl is controlled by both regimes as well, and can also produce complex missile components.

-- We do not know the identity of the intended end-user, but given the machines' capabilities, are concerned that they could be destined for an entity involved in Syria's ballistic missile program.

(Additional talking point to be used if Post considers useful)

-- We also want to advise you that the sale by Liechti of regime-controlled items to a Syrian entity could result in the imposition of sanctions against Liechti pursuant to U.S. law under the Iran, Syria and North Korea Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA).

-- We greatly appreciate your cooperation on nonproliferation issues and hope this information is useful in supporting your export-control efforts.

End talking points/non-paper

15. (U) Washington POC is ISN/MTR John Paul Herrmann (Phone: 202-647-1430). Please slug any reporting on this issue for ISN/MTR.

16. (U) A word version file of this document will be posted at [www.state.sgov.gov/demarche](http://www.state.sgov.gov/demarche).  
RICE

NNNN

End Cable Text